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ABSTRACT

Addressing the question of how schools and teachers can foster an advanced level of reading awareness among secondary students, this paper focuses on the similarity in language used to describe recent research on both the composing process and comprehension as acts of constructing meaning. It presents a perspective on the reading/writing relationship, and argues that the thoughtful reader is one who reads as if composing a text for yet another reader who lives within. The paper states that every speech act is an action, and that every speaker and every listener is trying to get the other one in the discourse to behave in a certain way. It is noted that this perspective implies that knowing why a speaker said something is just as important as knowing what was said, and that this--in conjunction with readers monitoring their own comprehension--indicates that reading should be viewed as an act of composing. In this composing model of reading, the paper argues, there are key authorial roles a thoughtful reader must play: planner, composer, editor, and monitor. It also describes strategies teachers can use in the classroom to promote thoughtfulness to self (a role that encourages students to become better at drawing essential inferences from texts), thoughtfulness to an author, the suspending of judgment, and critical reading. (CRH)

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Reading Education Report No. 50

ON BECOMING A THOUGHTFUL READER: LEARNING TO READ LIKE A WRITER

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On Becoming a Thoughtful Reader:

Learning to Read Like a Writer

We have written this paper in order to address the question of what schools and teachers should do to foster growth among secondary students who have jumped enough hurdles to earn the mantle of reader; put differently, we tried to answer the question, How can you take students to an advanced level of reading awareness? As we pondered the question, we began to develop a metaphor for what it meant to be a truly competent reader. The metaphor was fueled by our fascination with scholars such as Graves (1982), Murray (1968, 1981), and Flower and Hayes (1981), who were developing emerging theories of the composing process, and it was fanned by our preoccupation with various schema-theoretic accounts of reading by such authors as Rumelhart (1980); Collins, Brown, and Larkin (1980); Spiro (1980); and Anderson (1977)--all of which regarded comprehension as an act of constructing meaning. What struck us about these independently developed accounts of two processes long regarded as separate curricular domains was the similarity of language which these scholars used when describing composing and comprehension. Hence the genesis of our title. The thoughtful reader, we will argue, is the reader who reads as if she were a writer composing a text for yet another reader who lives within her.

Within this metaphorical framework, we will try to persuade those who read our text of the truth of our perspective. We plan to accomplish this persuasion in three steps. First, we give our perspective (theory is too generous a label) on the reading/writing relationship. Second, we offer a composing model of reading, delineating the key authorial roles every thoughtful reader must play: the planner, the composer, the editor, and the monitor. Third, we extend our metaphor of thoughtfulness into the classroom by offering suggestions about some admittedly conventional and some less conventional strategies teachers can use to help students learn how to become thoughtful to themselves, to authors, and to texts.

Our Perspective on the Reading/Writing Relationships

We view reading as the process of negotiating meaning between a reader and an author through the medium of a text. (Some may call this reader-author interaction; others call it transaction, the primary differences being that (a) the transactionalists have a more contextualized view of the negotiation, and (b) the transactionalists claim that the very process of negotiation creates a new "whole" that cannot be characterized as the mere sum or product of the two points of view each held originally.) Texts are written by authors with the intention that readers will create meaning. Now most authors are vain enough to expect readers to create a meaning that bears some resemblance to the meaning they had in mind when they wrote

the text. But even the most egoistic of writers expect some variation (that is part of the fun of writing), and they also expect readers to fill in certain gaps in their writing. Mostly these are gaps which the authors, because they deemed the information too obvious or because they wanted to create intentional ambiguity, have themselves chosen to create. Texts, conversely, are read by readers who expect that authors have been as considerate as possible in providing enough clues about the meaning of the text to make it possible for readers to reconstruct the entire message in a model as similar as possible to the model the authors had in mind when they wrote it.

The perspective from which our view emanates is labeled speech-act theory and represents an example of the application of linguistic theory stemming from a branch of linguistics called pragmatics. The key concept is that every speech act, every utterance, and every attempt at understanding an utterance is, at heart, an action. Every speaker and every listener is trying to get his or her companion in the discourse to behave in a certain way. Such a perspective implies that knowing <u>why</u> a speaker said something is just as important in interpreting the message as is knowing <u>what</u> was said. It also implies that knowing the context in which the message was delivered is important to interpretation. The question, "What have you been up to lately?" requires a different response in a cocktail lounge as compared to

the expected response in a teachers' lounge or an academic hallway.

Recently, several writers have applied these notions to written text comprehension/composition (Bruce, 1980, 1981; Tierney, 1982; Tierney, LaZansky, Raphael, & Cohen, in press). At the heart of these conceptualizations is the notion that just as readers rely on their knowledge of the subject under consideration in a text, so must they use their knowledge of and guesses (inferences) about what the author is trying to do, or, to use Bruce's terminology, what the author's "plans" are. (Different writers use different terms. We find the terms "plan," "goals," "intentions," and "purposes" used synonomously, and we use them interchangeably in this chapter.) Bruce believes that failure to recognize authors' plans can interfere with something as simple as finding the main idea to something as subtle as recognizing personna, tone, or point of view. Plan recognition can make the difference between "minimally sufficient comprehension and deep understanding of a text."

Adopting a speech-act orientation leads us to conclude that the extent of knowledge about goals that are typical of authors and about the conventions they typically use to achieve those goals determines how easily readers are able to construe specific authors' intentions and meanings. No matter how extensive or sparse that knowledge, however, the assumptions (they may be conclusions) readers make about authors' intentions and their own

intentions are precisely what cause them to interpret particular parts of a text as contributing toward those overall intentions. This explains, of course, why different readers with the same amount of knowledge about the topic of text can understand and/or remember different parts of a text with varying degrees of efficiency (Carey, Harste, & Smith, 1981; Tierney, LaZansky, Raphael, & Mosenthal, 1979); they read the authors' intentions differently and hence assign different interpretations or different degrees of importance to particular parts of a text.

We would go a step further to suggest that reading and writing are situated accomplishments which involve not only a "tug of war" between reader and writer but also between the reader and herself. Writers, as they compose texts, consider the transactions in which readers are likely to engage. But also, when writers compose text they negotiate its meaning with what Murray calls their other self--that inner reader (Murray claims the author is the author's first reader) who continually reacts to what the writer has written, is writing, and is about to write (Murray, 1981). Writers use this other self for at least two functions: to monitor their composition and to act as their first audience. Similarly, readers, as they comprehend texts, monitor their own comprehension, asking themselves questions like, "How well will my own inner reader understand what I have composed?" They act as if they were themselves writing. As

Tierney (1982) has found in his analysis of readers' and writers' think-aloud protocols:

> At points in the text, the mismatch between writers' and readers' think-alouds was apparent: writers suggested concerns which readers did not focus upon, and readers expressed concerns which writers did not appear to consider. There was also a sense in which the writers' think-alouds suggested that at times writers assumed the role of readers. As writers thought aloud, generated text, and moved to the next set of subassembly directions, they would often comment about the writers' craft as readers might. There was also a sense in which writers marked their compositions with an "okay" as if the "okay" marked a movement from a turn as reader to a turn as writer. Analyses of the readers' think-alouds suggested that the readers often felt frustrated by the writers' failure to explain why they were doing what they were doing. Also the readers were often critical of the writers' craft, including writers' choice of words, clarity, and accuracy. There was a sense in which the readers' think-alouds assumed a reflexive character as if the readers were rewriting the texts. If one perceived the readers as craft-persons, unwilling to blame their tools for an ineffective product, then one might view the readers as unwilling to let the text provided stand in the way of their successful achievement of their goals or pursuit of understanding. (p. 78)

Consistent with this notion of the reader as a writer, we believe that comprehension is, in its most sensitive realization, an act of composing. Whether the transaction is between the reader and a writer, a writer and his inner reader, or a reader and her inner reader, reading should be viewed as an act of composing rather than recitation or regurgitation.

A Composing Model of Reading

It is our intention to develop the premise that reading is an event in which thoughtful readers act as composers. On the premise that no one can be a thoughtful reader unless and until

one reads as if one were a master writer, we offer a model of thoughtful reading which has many parallels with models of the writing process (Flowers & Hayes, 1981). Then we will use this model as the basis for discussing the processes in which thoughtful readers engage. In particular, we will outline the essential roles of a thoughtful reader: the planner, the composer, the editor, and the monitor.

Regardless of the reading situation, we hold that thoughtful reading entails all four roles interactively. With a view to defining these in more detail, we now turn to a description of the thoughtful reader in terms of each role as well as in the context of different author-reader collaborations.

Reader as Planner

The thoughtful reader plans her reading of a text. Planning involves some commonly accepted reading behaviors, such as setting purposes or goals and mobilizing knowledge about the topic (which might lead to predicting what the author will say or asking oneself questions that the text might address). But it also involves some less commonly acknowledged behaviors such as alignment (taking a position of belief with respect to the text and author). In the role of reader as planner, the reader acts in a manner similar to what Flower and Hayes suggest is the way writers begin their compositions. The purposes or goals a reader may set for herself may be procedural ("Now let's see, I want to get a sense of the overall topic"), substantive ("I need

to find out what were the causes of the Great Depression"), or intentional ("I wonder what this author's point is" or "I wonder what I can learn from this").

Goals are created by readers. Even if an author (or teacher) has certain goals for a text, readers have to interpret and accept them before they can have any effect on the reading. A reader may read a text with several simultaneous goals--some she accepted from the author or teacher and some she set for herself. These goals can be embedded in one another, mutually supportive, or conflicting. Also, the goals may assume different levels of specificity, especially as readers fine-tune them along the way. A writer whom one of us interviewed recently about a project he had completed on American Indians illustrates this notion of fine tuning. His goals for writing an essay changed as he planned his text: "I began with the topic Indians, but that was too broad. I decided to narrow my focus to the Hopis, but that was not what I was really interested in. Finally, I decided that I really wanted to learn about medicine men."

Knowledge mobilization is another major process related to planning. The knowledge, or prior experience, that a reader or writer mobilizes has an ongoing influence on all aspects of composing. Indeed, it is well substantiated that readers with more background knowledge are apt to read text with greater comprehension, just as writers with more background knowledge are apt to write more coherently (Anderson, Reynolds, Schallert, &

Goetz, 1977; Tierney, et al., 1979). But it is important to realize that knowledge mobilization goes beyond mere access to information. As a reader reads or as a writer writes, each must bring to bear the "right" background information, whether "right" be measured in terms of (a) the amount of information that is appropriate; (b) the level of specificity appropriate; (c) the timeliness of the information (that is, employing just that "right" piece of information at just the right time).

From recent surveys of the study habits of high school students (Schallert & Tierney, 1982), we conclude that they spend very little time researching, or even considering, topics prior to, during, or after reading the text. Most students read a text once without pausing to reflect, rarely refer to any other sources for relevant information, and rarely consider what they already know as they develop plans for dealing with the subject matter addressed in a text.

Another aspect of planning essential to creating meaning is alignment with respect to text and author. When a reader aligns herself vis-a-vis the text and/or author, she decided upon the position of credulity she will take. For example, she may find herself identifying with a character in a narrative or she may decide to assume the position of an eyewitness to the events in a story or historical account. She may decide to side with the author of a persuasive text and take his point of view, or she may decide to do battle with the author.

Alignments has a powerful effect on comprehension and memory. Tierney and his colleagues (Tierney et al., 1979) gave groups of college students texts to read that differed only in terms of the explicitly identified author--who was either an administrator or a student. They found that students given the student version developed fuller understandings and more critical appraisals of what the author was doing. Tierney attributed this difference to students' disposition to identify more readily with the student than the administrator author. In some other work, Tierney (Tierney, et al., in press) found that students who made some decision about how to align themselves with the author and his intentions were better able to figure out how to follow a complex set of directions for putting together a model water pump.

Obviously this aspect of planning, like the others, requires constant monitoring and modification along the way. And sometimes readers will be more successful than at other times in aligning themselves. But the critical point is that alignment influences comprehension and the consequent model of meaning a reader is able to build from the cues provided by the text on the page.

The Composer of Meaning

We know that the plans a reader brings to a text and the knowledge domains she selects as candidates to be modified by the information in the text influence the meaning she composes.

Regardless of those plans, however, every reader must, at every instant during reading, satisfy herself about what the meaning of the current text she has composed. She views the text on the page as one of many resources she has available for creating the inner text (the one she is writing for her inner reader); these resources include, along with her current assessment of what she already knows, the goals she has accepted for reading the text, the predictions she has made, and the questions she has asked. The text is but a blueprint for meaning; the reader must create her own image of what the edifice looks like. That image is her model of meaning, what she will pass on to her inner reader.

The driving force in building the model of meaning is a quest for coherence. The reader strives to make things fit. Not only does she want each idea to fit with her initial expectations about the text; she also wants each succeeding text segment to fit with the model in whatever state it currently exists. To achieve that fit, she often has to fill in gaps that did not appear in her blueprint (the text on the page); we call these inferences ("He must be the hero!" or "She must be going to buy a new car"). Other times, she has to revise her model because subsequent data from the blueprint are too convincing for her to maintain her current working model of meaning ("He can't be the hero if he did that!" or "No, it's a mink coat!"). Sometimes in order to maintain the fit, she will have to refine or even redefine her purpose because the model she has built requires it

("It's more interesting to try to see what this guy is trying to convince me of than it is to learn about new car models"). Other times, and there is considerable evidence for this (Bartlett, 1932; Steffensen, Joag-dev, & Anderson, 1979), she will ignore data from the blueprint in order to maintain her model ("That just can't be true!").

The point is that every reader strives for that fit between her current working model and the data she interprets to be in the blueprint (the text on the page). Homeostasis and equilibrium are the goals of model building. And the reason every reader wants these is that she wants to make the task of reading as simple as possible for that inner reader she knows is going to read the text she is composing.

The Editor

Planning and composing never result in a complete text for our thoughtful reader; the instant she creates a model she seems happy with (one that fits), she adopts the role of editor! We have already alluded to this editorial function in suggesting the occasional necessity for model revision. But editors can require more than fine tuning. They can demand wholesale revisions in the model.

If readers are to develop control over the models of meaning they build, they must approach a text with the same deliberateness, time, and reflection that a good author employs as he revises his text. They must examine their developing

interpretations and view the models they build as draft-like in quality and subject to revision. Good students engage in behaviors such as rereading, annotating the text on the page with reactions, and questioning whether the model they have built is what they really want. One should not assume that merely allowing time for examination and revision will elicit such behaviors. Most students need to be given support and feedback as they attempt to edit the models of meaning they build.

We would have difficulty imagining how anybody could disagree with these notions, yet when we examine practice there appears to be little support in the offering. In fact, to suggest that readers should approach the text as a master writer who carefully crafts an understanding across several drafts--who pauses, rethinks, and revises--is contrary to what we find in practice. Observations of secondary students suggest that they approach most text with a single mandate and style. Their mandate is to read the text for purposes of test taking and hence they try to memorize. Their style is to read their textbook through only once, despite the difficulties they have concentrating on what is important in a text. Speed reading is often regarded as a panacea and its use is developed with little regard for the conditions under which rapid reading is either detrimental or helpful. Indeed many reading tests and some curricular practices encourage this style.

The Monitor

Every thoughtful reader needs an executive, a monitor who examines the balance of power amongst planner, composer, and editor, to decide which of these other roles should dominate the process at any given point. The monitor is the one who decides whether the image, the model of meaning, is suitable to turn over to the reader's inner reader. The monitor can decide at any point during the reading to call up the editor; to ask the planner to revise his goals or to activate a different knowledge structure or to assume a different position with respect to the author; to tell the composer that he is giving too much weight to some features of the blueprint at the expense of other features. Like any good executive, the monitor is sometimes harsh and demanding; but at other times, is warm and supportive, acting as counselor and commiserator. And ultimately, of course, the monitor decides when a text is "ready."

Our model is depicted graphically in Figure 1. There are three major components--a reader, an author, and a text. Within both the reader and the writer there exist several other components

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Insert Figure 1 about here.

Within the author, there are two kinds of text. The first is the text the author has in mind (at however vague a stage of

development) when he begins the writing process. And there is the text the author has in mind as he starts to set ink to paper. It is different from the first inner text because it has been acted upon by the author's planner, composer, editor, and monitor. It is different from the text on the page because it can be read and reacted to by the author's inner reader (what Murray calls the other self) and sent back to the writer's four selves for reworking. The text on the page is just that--nothing more. (In our model, we do not mean to imply that a whole text is produced at once at any stage along the way in either the reader's mind or the writer's mind. These processes are repetitive, recursive, and sometimes can even occur simultaneously.)

Within the reader, there are also two texts. The first is the text that the reader prepares for her four selves (planner, composer, editor, and monitor) to react to. It is different from the text on the page because it had to be interpreted even to get into the reader's working memory. And it is different from the inner text the reader's four selves prepare for the inner reader precisely as a function of the way those four selves modify it in preparation for the inner reader.

There you have our model of reader as writer. Reading occurs in a complex collaborative context. The collaboration occurs among all major components in the model (and is depicted graphically by dotted lines). First, the reader (in all of her

four roles) must collaborate with the author implied by the text on the page to decide upon the intentions of that author and how they mesh with her goals. Second, the reader collaborates with text, deciding what cues from that blueprint deserve what weight in helping to build a model of meaning. Third, the reader's four selves (planner, composer, editor, and monitor) must collaborate with one another in order to build the best, most coherent, and most considerate model of meaning possible. Fourth, the ultimate collaboration occurs when the reader confronts the inner reader, the one for whom this gift has been prepared, and waits patiently for a sign from the inner reader indicating "Yes, I understand."

Promoting Thoughtful Reading in the Classroom

Another way of characterizing this juggling act called reading is to imagine that a thoughtful reader attempts to decide where her thoughtfulness will be focused as she balances a variety of collaborative relationships: she can be thoughtful to herself, thoughtful to the text, and thoughtful to the author. We find it useful, for purposes of demonstrating instructional activities, to decompose our generic and holistic notion of thoughtfulness into these three facets (self, text, and author). In doing so, we commit the cardinal sin of implying that these are separable and distinct components. Rest assured that we intend no such implication. We know that they are but different perspectives on the same unitary thoughtfulness, and we know that sometimes the best way to be thoughtful to an author is to be

thoughtful to ourselves (and vice versa, of course). Nonetheless, we find the decomposition useful in order to get a sharper picture of what we mean by thoughtfulness; also, we think that there will be times, purposes, and situations in which a reader will want to focus her thoughtfulness on one of these elements in the reading situation at the expense, perhaps, of the other two. As we decompose this thoughtfulness, we will attempt to reach two goals. First, we try to show how each of these foci implicates, in different degrees, each of the reader's four selves (planner, composer, editor, and monitor). Second, we outline instructional activities designed to facilitate each type of thoughtfulness.

Thoughtfulness to Self

The best way for a reader to be thoughtful to herself is to emphasize the role of planner while reading. Let us illustrate what we mean. Hansen and Pearson (1983) trained groups of fourth-grade students to become better at drawing essential inferences from texts by encouraging them, prior to reading, to discuss personal experiences related to the topic of the selection and to predict what might happen in the story. Additionally, they often discussed with these students why they were doing these activities ("because comprehension is easier when you compare what happens in a text to what you already know about"). One day, one of the students came to the reading group and volunteered, "Say, you know what I did the other day when we

were in the library? I got out a book about whales. And before I read it, I sat down and said to myself, 'What do I already know about whales that will help me understand this book?' And I wrote it down."

Now this student clearly took to heart what the teachers in Hansen and Pearson's study were trying to teach him. He was taking control over the responsibility for his own reading by trying to simplify the upcoming reading task. He was trying to convince himself, as too few of our elementary or secondary students do, that he was not starting out this new reading encounter from ground zero. In a sense, he was telling the author (and himself) that he already shared some common ground and experience with the author and that he was going to use this shared knowledge to minimize the cognitive load the author was going to try to place on his shoulders. He was clearly engaged in what all good writers do--planning for the piece they are about to compose. Examined from another perspective, he had decided that he was going to place himself in what Spiro calls an "updating knowledge" mode of reading (Spiro, 1980). This is a mode in which the reader assumes a central and active stance toward the reading act, in which he takes an attitude of <u>constructive arrogance</u> ("Let me read this selection to see if the author has something to say that I didn't already know"). Perhaps the most notable proponent of reading with a set for constructive arrogance was George Bernard Shaw. It is said of

Shaw that whenever he got a new book, he looked at the title and immediately sat down to write a table of contents for it. Upon completion, he would peruse the book to see what the author had left out!

There are many ways to promote "constructive arrogance" in reading. In fact, the whole tradition of the directed reading-thinking activity (DRTA) (Stauffer, 1969) is philosophically consistent with this principle (although one can argue that some versions of DRTA concentrate more on getting at the text on the page than we intend). Several writers have developed specific procedures that allow teachers to help students strut out their prior knowledge about a topic before reading a selection on that topic (Pearson & Johnson, 1978; Johnson, Toms-Bronowski, & Pittleman, 1982; Pearson & Spiro, 1980; Hanff, 1971).

Pearson and Johnson (1978) call their variation on this theme "previewing." The teacher begins with a probe like, "Before we read about X, let's see what we already know about X." Then the teacher proceeds to ask a series of questions that allow the students to develop hypotheses and guesses concerning what will occur in the selection. Following the reading, the teacher asks students to discuss their guesses, hypotheses, and predictions in relation to what they perceive as actually having appeared in the text. The focus in such a procedure, as is true for all of these techniques, is on "updating knowledge," on integrating what you know with what is in a text.

In the semantic mapping approach (Johnson, et al.), the teacher begins by placing a key (and hopefully familiar) concept from the selection on the chalkboard. Students then free associate individually with that concept, jotting down categories of concepts that the key word makes them think of. Then, meeting as a group, they build a common semantic map of categories related to that word, they label the categories, and they discuss what they included and why. The implicit purpose for the subsequent reading assignment is to update the group semantic map, an activity that can profitably follow the reading of the passage.

Hanf's (1971) procedure is more like Bernard Shaw's stance. The teacher begins with a question like, "What would you expect to find in a book with the title, Early Man? What would some of the chapter titles and subheadings be?" The students and teacher then build what is essentially a table of contents for the selection, afterwards reading and comparing their scheme with the author's.

These are all laudable techniques, and we encourage teachers to use them in literature and content area classes (they really do help). However, they all lack one essential feature: in none of them is there provision for turning the strategy over to the students in order to help them develop the kind of ownership over the strategy that will guarantee that they can and will use it on their own (as did the student from the Hansen and Pearson study).

We wish we had more evidence about techniques teachers can use to bridge the gap between teacher-controlled and student-controlled application of those strategies. About the only recommendation we can make at present is to require students to try these activities on their own after several have been done as a group. Then students can meet with the teacher to discuss similarities and differences among individuals' maps or previews in an effort to provide mutually supportive feedback.

Another shortcoming of the activities discussed so far is that they have emphasized things teachers can do before and, to a lesser extent, after reading to help students build both a mental model and a written schematization of what they know about a topic. We have not emphasized what can or should go on <u>during</u> reading. In other words, we have not shown how the planner has to interact with the composer, monitor, and editor to alter strategies during reading. In the ideal situation, students will learn to use an updating-knowledge set to evaluate their ongoing processing of text; that is, as they read, they will compare and contrast what they garner from a text with their current model of knowledge of the topic that the text addresses. They may revise their mental model (and maybe even their written record of that model) along the way. They will pause and reflect during their reading; they may hold discussions with themselves on issues like, "How does that jibe with what I already know?" or "Hm, I'd never thought about it that way before!" or "Now I see why those

people left their homeland!" (Notice that in these introspective examples, the planner is forced to collaborate with the composer and editor.) In fact, marginal notes by expert readers often reveal this sort of tug-of-war amongst planner, composer, editor, and the author of the text. Consider the kinds of marginal notes you make when you read an informational text about a familiar topic. We think you will find they reveal this kind of mental play; we know they do for us. Consider also that when you read an unfamiliar text, you are probably more likely to use underlining or marginal notes that reflect an attempt to summarize or highlight information from the text. The point we want to emphasize is that thoughtfulness to self while reading will reflect this dynamic interplay betwen text and prior knowledge at all points during reading rather than only at two static points, before and after reading.

There is at least some empirical support for this dynamic ongoing view of composing models for reading. Hayes and Tierney (1982) found that high school students could understand and remember newspaper articles about cricket better when they first read texts about baseball (with or without direct analogies to cricket); they also found a tendency for students to understand better a second cricket article than a first, implying, of course, that their knowledge structures were being built and revised during the reading. Similarly, Crafton (1981) found that the best predictor of understanding a second article on a

scientific topic was the amount of knowledge growth high school students exhibited after reading a first article on the topic, again implying that knowledge structures are dynamic, and that dynamism is an important factor in building models of meaning. Graves and his colleagues (Graves, Cooke, & LaBerge, 1983) found that high school students who read a 500-word synopsis of complex short stories better understood and remembered information in the longer stories but not in the synopsis.

These are only a few studies (Schumacher, Cronin, Klare, & Moses, 1982; White, 1980) that have examined changes in schemata that occur along the way during the reading or writing of a single selection coupled with an analysis of what effect these changes have on subsequent comprehension or composition; more are certainly needed. At the very least, however, the studies we have cited imply that knowledge structures are (or can be) dynamic, which is precisely the feature we want to attribute to our thoughtful reader.

Such activities emphasize thoughtfulness to self in several ways. First, by emphasizing what students already know about an upcoming selection, they help students to perceive reading as imposing a minimal rather than a maximal load on new learning. Second, they place readers' purpose into "proper perspective" by suggesting that what is important is what their new knowledge structures will look like after they have integrated new information in the text into existing knowledge structures. In

other words, they help students to resist the temptation to learn and remember the text information in a compartmentalized schema to be regurgitated for a test and then purged from memory forever. Third, they can help students become self-diagnostic in a way that will allow them to allocate the attention and cognitive energy they devote to a text differentially. If, for example, one of these previewing activities reveals to a particular student that she knows much about the topic, then she can indeed decide to approach the reading with an updating knowledge set. If, alternatively, it reveals a real lack of knowledge, then she may want to shift into another mode of processing in which she becomes either more thoughtful to the text or thoughtful to the author (and in which the composer and the editor assume more dominant roles than does the planner).

Thoughtfulness to Author

There are many ways a reader can be thoughtful to an author. For example, a reader can decide that even though she could read a text for purposes of updating her knowledge, she is going to read the text by trying to get inside the author's head and evaluate it from his point of view, trying to discover his intentions and plans. In other words, the reader can "suspend judgment" while reading in order to give the author his day in court. In the limiting case of suspended judgment, the reader can say to herself, "Now I know the author knows a lot more about this topic than do I, so what I'll do is to build my model of the

meaning of this topic by relying primarily upon the ideas the author has put into this text rather than any knowledge I may already have."

But a reader need not take such an uncritical stance; in fact, the reader can assume the role of editor-for-the-author, acting as the author's other self. Such a stance requires a reader to say, "Now what is it the author is trying to say and how can I help him say it better?" This is, in fact, the role that professional journal and book editors play. As an aside, it is exactly the role that we as coauthors of this chapter have played with one another in trying to bring off a coherent representation of the ideas that seemed so clear in our minds but so opaque in print.

There is a third sense in which a reader can be thoughtful to an author. Instead of deciding what the author should have said, the reader can decide to read to determine the various devices the author has used to try to accomplish his purposes as author. Here the reader looks at the logical structure of the author's arguments, the use of propaganda devices and emotionally laden terms, the use of literary devices such as figurative language, irony, and various genres. The reader, to use a classical distinction in composition circles, examines the variation in <u>forms</u> the author uses to achieve different <u>functions</u>. A reader who assumes this third stance can also be thought of as engaging in <u>critical reading</u>.

Suspending judgment. We have a mutual friend who possesses a fairly extreme point of view about how reading research ought to be conducted. When he reads and is asked to pass judgment on an article supporting a view of research diametrically opposed to his own he will quite often write something like the following: "Given the author's view of what reading is and what counts as evidence in this world, the author has done a credible job. Before I can accept the article for publication, however, I must insist that the author state up front his assumptions about the reading process and the nature of reading research for his readers to see." What this reveals about our friend is an ability to read and evaluate a text from inside the author's head. Granted, he wants the author to tell his readers what his assumptions are (and, we suspect, he probably wants the readers to reject those assumptions--there is method in his madness!); yet he is able to distinguish the reading of a text from within the author's as opposed to within the reader's schema.

But notice that our friend's reading is not driven by the text; instead, it is driven by the conclusion he draws about what the author's purpose is. A cynic might argue that we need not exert much instructional muscle in order to get students to read from such a perspective, that they pay all too much respect to the author's message when they read. But that cynic would be wrong because she would be confusing thoughtfulness to text with thoughtfulness to author. Recall the evidence we presented

suggesting that most high school students (we suspect even college students) are all too thoughtful to the text when they read and pay little attention to the author and his intentions (Schallert & Tierney, 1982).

Acting as editor-for-the-author. Regarding the editorial perspective as it relates to being thoughtful to an author, Harrison asked high school students to rewrite passages from science texts that they found confusing and/or incomplete (Harrison, 1982). He then gave different students either the original or student-edited versions of the texts to read and remember. He found that the student-edited versions were better comprehended and remembered than were the publisher's originals. We think Harrison's experiment has interesting implications for instruction. As a coordinated reading/writing activity, English teachers could ask a group of students jointly enrolled in a history or science class to rewrite parts of their textbooks in ways they think might be helpful to their peers.

What such a set of activities might do for students is to help them realize what every thoughtful reader (and writer) must realize: text is not a fixed entity. There are several ways in which text is not fixed. First, every good composer of text is constantly consulting his or her other self for editorial suggestions and revisions. As writers, one conclusion we have drawn about our own writing is that we never finish a paper; we simply stop writing it. So the particular marks that happen to

turn up on the pages of a journal, volume, or book are more likely to be the accident of a deadline (or boredom or frustration) than any sense of closure. Second, a text is never fixed because good authors are always "becoming" and seldom find themselves "having arrived" at a fixed point of view. In this sense, a text that appears in print is like a snapshot of a person on a particular day. Third, a text can never be fixed because in order to be a text it has to be interpreted by a reader; we have already shown that variation in reader background and purpose will guarantee that a text remains a variable rather than a fixed phenomenon. Similarly, we believe that reading, like writing, is never complete; one simply stops at some point.

Another activity that will help make the point about text not being a fixed entity is to have student volunteers share with the class different revisions of a paragraph or essay. The volunteer can share with the class her changes and the reasons for those changes. Other students can volunteer their reactions to the different versions. If you can find a professional writer in your area, get him to share the techniques he uses during revision. But short of a professional writer, lots of people--business persons, principals, other teachers--have to write and may even revise versions of a text. They can share their revision experiences too.

A less natural, but nonetheless instructive, editorial activity involves a teacher giving students a passage along with

a statement of what the author was trying to accomplish in the passage. For example, a teacher could say, "Here the author is trying to create a somber mood to convince us that nuclear weapons should be banned. How could she have done a better job of creating that mood and convincing us of her point?" Even more instructive would be to offer students passages on both familiar and unfamiliar topics so that they realize that one's ability to assume an editorial stance is a function of prior knowledge.

We recently encountered a couple of computer programs for reading comprehension instruction that intrigued us with the possibilities they suggested for helping students assume an editorial posture toward reading. In one program, the student is instructed to assume that she has just been hired as an editor who sits at the rewrite desk of a newspaper (Schnitz & Fairweather, 1982). Her job is to take the phoned-in news items from reporters in the field and edit them for printing in the evening edition. She is also told that one of the quirks of the field reporters is that in their haste to meet a deadline they often do some careless writing. The student's task is to read the article as it was phoned in and typed and to delete irrelevant sentences. The designers' goal is to help guide students to find main ideas; they assume, quite reasonably, that a student cannot determine what is irrelevant without knowing what each paragraph is about. This program operates in an

interactive mode, so students who delete essential sentences are provided special instruction and feedback and asked to try again.

A second computer program, developed by Anderson, takes the form of team competition (Anderson, 1982). The game is called "Suspect Sentences." One team of two students is given a short passage from a story by a famous writer, say a Steinbeck or a Tolstoi. Then they are asked to insert a sentence or two into the passage. After they have done so, another team of two students reads the doctored passage and is asked to find the sentence(s) inserted by the other teams (they are told who the author is). It is fairly easy to image the set of authorship features that each team must attend to in creating and/or detecting the bogus sentence(s).

Such activities are facilitated by the use of a microcomputer since insertion and deletion are so simple, but we can imagine doing similar activities in a classroom using overhead projectors or orally presented texts. An ambitious soul could even develop worksheets along these lines.

More important, the range of features that could form the basis of insertions or deletions (or rearrangements for that matter) into such computer-assisted activities is limited only by our understanding of the techniques that authors use to achieve their ends. Who knows? We may yet discover uses for the computer in classrooms beyond drill and practice.

Critical reader. The critical reading stance, the third of our three ways a reader an be thoughtful to an author, is unquestionably the one on which we have to date made the most curricular progress. Whether as part of a reading program, a writing program, or a course in rhetoric or literature, we have for many years paid at least lip service to the notion that readers need to learn about the devices authors use to persuade readers to a particular point of view or attitude about a topic or issue.

One point about this section. We had a great deal of difficulty deciding where this section belonged. When one reads critically, does it represent thoughtfulness to self or to author? Certainly in the sense of thoughtful as being sensitive and kind, it is not very thoughtful to an author to read critically, and a reader who reads critically is, indeed, helping herself. But we decided to put it here because critical reading does require the same kind of "getting to the author" behavior that both the suspended judgment and editorial stances demand; in other words, we contend that one cannot read critically without "getting inside the author's head" to discover his intentions and the devices he uses to achieve them.

To read critically one must recognize authorial devices at all levels of textual complexity--word, sentence, paragraph, passage--for such devices exist at all these levels. However, there is one question that every thoughtful reader can ask in

order to discern an author's intentions at all of these levels: "Why did the author choose to say what he said this way instead of choosing one or the very large number of alternatives available to him?" She must recognize that there are numerous surface forms in which any idea could have been expressed and then ask what the particular surface form chosen reveals about the author.

A truism about synonyms is that any two words which appear to be synonymous (that is, denote the same referent) at one level of analysis will turn out to be semantically distinct at another, deeper level of analysis (that is, carry slightly different connotations or colorings). Even such seemingly identical pairs as big and large, plump and fat connote different attitudes. Compare "My, what a big baby!" with "My, what a large baby!"; the sentences just do not mean the same thing. The connotative meaning of a word can be thought of as the set of overtones every word comes with.

When these connotative selections build up over an entire paragraph or passage, they reveal what we usually call author bias. Students need to learn how an author's word choice influences the intended attitude he wants to give a reader about a topic. As a first attempt in achieving this kind of understanding, a teacher might give students different accounts of the same phenomenon or event, asking them to determine what it is in each account that determines the attitude the author seems

to want the reader to accept. Here is an example of what we mean, taken from Pearson and Johnson (1978):

Writer 1

> At 2:30 a.m. four courageous police officers braved darkness and the gunfire of three gangland mobsters to overtake the vicious criminals in their warehouse hideout near the waterfront.

Writer 2

> In an early morning shootout and fist fight, three suspects were captured by four city police officers in their warehouse hideout near the waterfront.

Writer 3

> At 2:30 a.m. four burly and brusque city cops burst in on three helpless alleged burglars. Using unnecessary brute force, the police subdued their victims in a warehouse hideout near the waterfront.

1. Which writer is least sympathetic to the police?
   a. Writer 1.
   b. Writer 2.
   c. Writer 3.
   d. I don't know.

2. Which writer is the most objective?

   a. Writer 1.
   b. Writer 2.
   c. Writer 3.
   d. I don't know.

3. In the account of writer 3, which set of words listed below gives you clues to his point of view?

   a. Four, city, hideout.
   b. Brusque, brute, victims.
   c. Waterfront, burglars, warehouse.
   d. I don't know. (p. 140)

A less formal (and more convincing) activity is to comb the daily newspaper, looking for examples of words authors use to

achieve such ends. We have found headlines in the sports page to be a particularly rich source for such examples. No teams ever win games or beat opponents; instead they trounce, devastate, overwhelm, edge, squeak by, eke out, and so forth. Quarterbacks are more likely to rifle or unleash passes than they are to throw them. Basketball teams riddle or penetrate defenses. Football defenses overwhelm or stifle offenses, not being content, we suppose, merely to stop them.

Just as someone can either stride or trudge off an airplane, so a runner can be described as fast, like an antelope, or as fast as lightning. There is a sense in which figurative language is to literal language what a word's connotative meaning is to its denotative meaning. An author does not say that a person runs like an antelope merely because he wants a reader to know the runner is fast; he does so intentionally because he (the author) knows that the sentence "He runs like an antelope" carries with it a set of overtones that the sentence "He is fast" does not.

Figurative language is used in situations in which the author "says one thing but means another." When a speaker says, "Boy, it's cold in here," he really means for the listener to close a door or window. Likewise, a writer who says, "John runs like a gazelle," does not literally mean that he uses four legs and takes long leaps; rather, he means (a) that John is fast and

(b) that John has at least a modicum of grace and stature (these are the overtones).

It is important to help a reader learn how and why an author uses figurative language. And there are two things a reader must learn to recognize about any figurative statement: (a) What its literal paraphrase might be and, more importantly, (b) how the set of overtones it carries with it represents the author's attempt to color a reader's attitude toward the topic described in figurative terms. Here is a succession of activities we think will help teachers help students achieve these two goals.

1. Have students select and/or compose literal paraphrases of figurative statements (for example, John runs like a gazelle = John is fast).

2. Have them discuss the overtones that the expression carries with it.

3. Ask them to compare differences in image and emotion that are suggested by alternative figurative paraphrases (for example, John runs like a gazelle, John runs like a cheetah, John is greased lightning, John runs like the wind, and so forth).

4. Working with a group, have the students generate as many figurative paraphrases of a given idea as possible and then discuss differences in interpretation invited by each paraphrase.

5. Pick a selection (narratives and magazine articles and feature sports stories are prime candidates) that possess a lot of figurative expressions. Peruse the text looking for examples.

For each one discovered, discuss its literal paraphrase, its overtones, and the range of alternative expressions the author could have picked.

Finally, students must learn to distinguish figurative comparisons from literal comparisons that are similar in surface structure. They need to learn that when a writer says a lime is like a lemon, he really means it, but that when he says lectures are like sleeping pills, he really means something quite different.

Another common critical reading phenomenon is the ability to distinguish statements of fact from statements of opinion. Learning this distinction is by no means a simple task, regardless of whether the learner is a survival reader, a thoughtful reader, or a truly expert adult reader. One problem with such distinctions is that there are many different criteria that distinguish facts from opinions. Hence one fact may be distinguished from one opinion on one criterion, and a second fact may be distinguished from a second opinion on a second criterion, and so on. The following pairs of statements illustrate the kinds of distinctions that need to be made between fact and opinion.

Consider, for example, the following pair of statements:

(1) Abe Lincoln was nicer than Stephen Douglas.

(2) Abe Lincoln was taller than Stephen Douglas.

Statement (1) is an opinion, while statement (2) is a statement of fact because it is easier to verify.

On the other hand, consider the following pair:

(3) I believe Abe Lincoln was tall for his time.

(4) Abe Lincoln was tall for his time.

Statement (3) is a statement of opinion because of the linguistic force of the hedge, while statement (4) is a statement of fact.

In statements (5) and (6) there is a difference on yet another dimension (granted that it is related to verifiability)--a dimension of qualitative versus quantitative:

(5) Abe Lincoln was the best lawyer in Springfield.

(6) Abe Lincoln won more cases than any other lawyer in Springfield.

Finally, the two following statements differ on still another dimension--general versus specific:

(7) Abe Lincoln was the emancipator of black Americans.

(8) Abe Lincoln led the country at the time the Emancipation Proclamation was issued.

A second problem is related to the first: a given fact may differ from a given opinion on several of these criteria simultaneously. Hence statement (5) is, at once, more qualitative, more general, and less verifiable than statement (6).

A third problem in distinguishing between statement of fact and opinion arises because many of the dimensions on which such

statements differ are better characterized as continua than as dichotomies. There is a continuum of verifiability, generality, or qualitativeness. Thus, one statement becomes more of a fact or less of an opinion than another; judgments are more relative than absolute.

A fourth problem revolves around the distinction between the linguistic form of the statement and the real-world truth or falsity of it. In the two following statements, there are two opinions (note the hedges) about statements of fact:

(9) Susan thinks the Brewers won the 1982 World Series.

(10) Mary thinks the Cardinals won the 1982 World Series.

One of the facts in statement (9) is false. Note further that both statements may be regarded as facts, for they report what each person thinks. By this logic, the following statement is a fact about an opinion:

(11) Matthew thinks the Brewers are better than the Cardinals.

This problem exists because fact has two meanings, captured by its two opposites: fact versus opinion and fact versus falsehood.

The final problem in these murky waters has to do with what we expect from writers as readers. We tolerate an author's opinion precisely when he supports it with fact. Contrast the degree of belief we are likely to afford to (12) versus (13).

(12) Abe Lincoln was the best lawyer in Springfield. He just had to be.

(13) Abe Lincoln was the best lawyer in Springfield. He had more clients than any of his colleagues. He won a higher percentage of his cases than did any of his colleagues. And, in 1854, the Illinois Bar Association honored him as lawyer of the year.

Instructionally, a thoughtful reader needs to be exposed to all the dimensions of "factuality" we have portrayed. She needs to learn what makes a statement more of a fact or more of an opinion as well as how these dimensions tend to covary. Above all she needs to learn how to evaluate opinions in the light of facts marshalled in support of them. The instructional suggestions of Pearson and Johnson (1978) may prove helpful here.

Thoughtfulness to the Text

We have puzzled ourselves to the point of exasperation over this section. We are not certain whether a reader can (or should) ever read with thoughtfulness to the text. In fact, we are not certain that the text on the page ever really exists, save in the trivial sense of ink marks on paper. Yet we know, by virtue of surveys of secondary readers' habits (Schallert & Tierney, 1982), that there is at least a negative sense in which a reader can read with grave thoughtfulness to text: to read to be able to regurgitate or recognize statements that literally did occur in that epiphenomenal mixture of ink and paper.

Now if one were to attribute any positive value to being thoughtful to a text, one might expect that we should suggest one

or two situations in which it would be appropriate, either reading procedural text (directions or process descriptions of a phenomenon) or reading very unfamiliar material in which a suspended judgment mode is called for. We say, "No," to reading procedural text; we think procedural texts are best read with the author of the text clearly at the fore. In fact, a study by Tierney suggests that readers can and should adopt this stance when reading to follow directions (Tierney, et al., in press). And when the reader encounters unfamiliar material, we believe that the author must dominate the reader's perspective. It is better, when a reader knows little about the topic, to ask, "What is the author trying to tell me?" than it is to ask "What does the text say?" In opting for the author rather than the text, the reader brings purpose to what might otherwise be a purposeless activity.

One of the few situations in which we find it useful for a reader to read with thoughtfulness to text is, ironically, when she engages in what Rosenblatt (1976) calls "aesthetic" rather than "efferent" reading. Lest you think us heretics, let us develop our argument.

We agree with Rosenblatt that sensitive aesthetic reading ultimately represents the best of transactions (we prefer collaborations) between author and reader. (By the way, we take issue with her position that efferent reading is different from aesthetic reading in terms of the complex collaboration required.)

But when a reader reads a poem or a short story or a novel, even if her ultimate goal is to be thoughtful to herself by discovering some new truth or by experiencing a feeling of exhilaration or awe, there is a place for thoughtfulness to text. Certainly we would not want our thoughtful reader to read simply for gist, updating knowledge; she might miss a lot if she tolerated minor miscues like "big" for "enormous." She might fail to catch the meaning conveyed by the prosody (intonational patterns and stress) of a line in a poem if she misread its meter. She might fail to appreciate the ambiguity of a metaphor in a Donne sonnet if she rushed too quickly to a conclusion about the author's intent or searched too rapidly for but a single schema into which she could slot the metaphor. We believe there can be a time in the reading of what must have been a carefully crafted piece of literature at which it is important to get the text off the page loyally and faithfully. The author took great care in deciding how the text should "fit" on the page; a reader can spend at least a little time trying to appreciate that fit.

Now we do not want our reader to stall in this suspended state of neutrality; in point of fact, she cannot. Immediately, she must switch her allegiance either to author or self to get on about the business of creating that inner text for her inner reader. But the suspension may spur reflection that will cause her to consider alternatives that another stance might not afford, and, along the way, she may develop a deeper appreciation

of the beauty of the language qua language. So you see, the irony of this seemingly heretical proposition of being thoughtful to the text (of considering, at least for a brief instant, the text as object) is that it ultimately proves to be a selfish act for it affords richness and possibility to that inner text that the reader is working so hard to compose.

Implications of Our Persuasion

We began by asserting our intention of persuading our readers to adopt our point of view regarding reading/writing relationships. We hope we have provided convincing evidence that both processes are, at heart, constructive in nature. If we have then we will attempt one last persuasion--to convince our readers that secondary reading programs are necessary even for the best of readers.

We feel that the culprit behind the lack of advanced developmental reading programs is an inadequate model of what it means to be a reader, especially a thoughtful reader. If one believes that reading requires the reader only to get the author's ideas off the page and into her head, then one can stop formal reading instruction at a point when most students are able to accomplish that feat. Indeed most secondary students can and do read in exactly that way. Hence it is justifiable to retain only a remedial reading program for those students not yet able to accomplish that task.

But if one views reading from our perspective--that it is the thoughtful act of preparing a considerate text for your inner reader--then one will realize that a reading program is only just getting off the ground when students enter their secondary years and that there is much to be done to help students become what we have called thoughtful readers.

An Epilogue

We have left out much that we could have dealt with in this paper. We plead guilty to our sins of omission. In the same breath, we rationalize our sins on grounds of space. We should have discussed how readers and writers become aware of structural features of text and how teachers can help students develop an awareness of how these formal features of text suit particular authorial functions or purposes. What we should have addressed but did not is how teachers help students develop operational concepts of narrative features like point of view, embedded narratorship (a narrator can tell a story, tell a story about someone telling a story, tell a story about someone telling a story about . . . ad infinitum), locus of conflict (interpersonal versus environmental), tone or personna (what a reader perceives about the social, political, or personal relationship between herself and an author).

We have no apology for our omissions. In fact, we could have listed more if we better understood the range of factors involved in interpreting author/reader relationships. We all

desperately need to stretch our conventional, pigeonholed notions of reading here and writing there to try to bridge the chasm that has for too long separated these reciprocal, mutually supportive processes.

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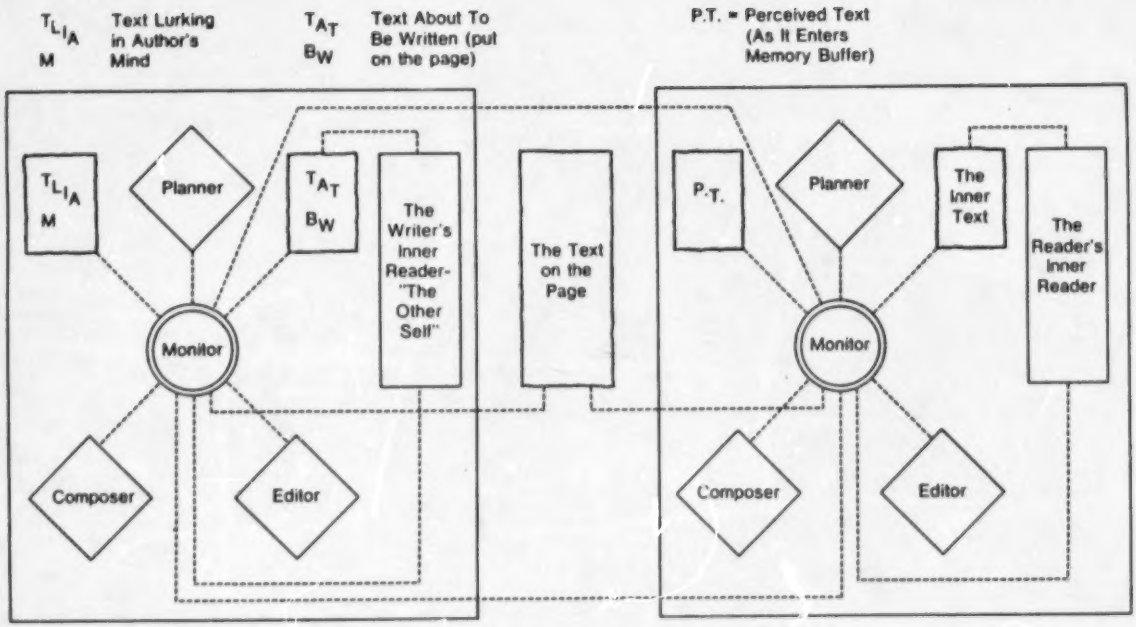

FIGURE 1. MODEL OF THE READER AS WRITER